United Nations S/2003/780

Security Council

Distr.: General
31 July 2003

Original: English

Letter dated 30 July 2003 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to convey the attached communication, dated 25 July 2003, which I received from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would bring it to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kofi A. **Annan**

03-44818 (E) 010803

Annex

Letter dated 25 July 2003 from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization addressed to the Secretary-General

In accordance with Security Council resolution 1088 (1996), I attach the monthly report on SFOR operations for June 2003. I would appreciate your making this report available to the Security Council.

(*Signed*) George **Robertson**

Enclosure

Monthly report to the United Nations on the operations of the Stabilization Force

1. Over the reporting period (1-30 June 2003) there were just over 11,700 troops deployed in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia.

2. The overall situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina remained stable during the period under review.

Security

3. The Stabilization Force (SFOR) continues to contribute to the maintenance of a safe and secure environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina; to collect weapons and ammunition in the framework of Operation Harvest; and to monitor possible terrorist-related threats throughout the country.

4. The total number of items collected during the month under Operation Harvest included 4,374 small arms (rifles, pistols and revolvers); 1,277,680 rounds of ammunition less than 20 mm; 4,343 rounds of ammunition between 20 mm and 76 mm; 993 rounds of ammunition greater than 76 mm; 25,156 hand grenades; 1,796 mines; 2,326.5 kilograms of explosives; and 26,139 other items (mortars, mortar rounds, rifle grenades, attack rockets and hand-made ordnance). These numbers constitute an increase compared to May 2003. SFOR continues to collect weapons held illegally throughout the country and pursues its information campaign to encourage weapons to be handed in voluntarily.

5. Representatives of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska military agreed to form a national level Joint Armed Forces Headquarters, which will include departments of personnel, intelligence, training, logistics, material-financial affairs and civil-military relations consisting of representatives from all three entities.

6. On 26 June, Predrag Banovic, a Bosnian Serb indicted by the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia for his involvement in the Kerterm concentration camp in 1992, where he and his twin brother were guards, agreed to plead guilty to one count of crimes against humanity. In exchange for his guilty plea, prosecutors dropped the remaining four counts of the indictment. Predrag Banovic and his twin brother, Nenad, were detained by SFOR troops in July 1998.

7. SFOR continued to monitor terrorism-related threats throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina. In that context, it conducted an operation near Jablanica on 29 June, aimed at increasing military presence in an area where mujahideen training camps and terrorism-related activities are suspected.

8. SFOR conducted an operation from 3 to 6 June in Bihac as a result of an increase in tension surrounding the trial of Fikret Abdic and Emin Pivic in the Cantonal Court. Abdic and Pivic were on trial for a range of criminal activities.

9. SFOR conducted an operation in Prozor following information received on 8 June that the former Croatian Army General Ante Gotovina had been seen in that area. Gotovina was not found, but it was reported later that Gotovina had stated that he recognized The Hague Tribunal and that, given the right circumstances, he would be ready to have talks with Tribunal investigators.

10. On 11 June, SFOR mounted an operation against Drago Nokolic in Bratunac. Nokolic is under indictment by the Tribunal for his involvement in the Srebrenica massacre of July 1995. He was not found.

11. The visit of Pope John Paul II to Banja Luka on 22 June 2003 passed off without incident. Reinforcing troops from each SFOR Brigade returned to their own locations on 23 June.

12. On 20 June, two personnel of the Republika Srpska Army (URS) were killed in the explosion of a bunker housing 3,800 anti-tank grenades at weapon storage site NV 039, near Derventa. The explosion was triggered by stored unstable ammunition. SFOR has been destroying the remaining unstable ammunition and the storage site was officially closed.

Cooperation and compliance by the parties

13. During the period under review, SFOR monitored 152 training and movement activities: 89 VRS and 63 VF (Army of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina). SFOR monitored 455 mine-clearing activities: 154 VRS and 301 VF. SFOR also carried out 54 inspections and verification of weapons storage sites: 23 VRS and 31 VF.

Cooperation with international organizations

14. Within capabilities and in accordance with its mandate, SFOR continues to provide assistance to the international organizations working in theatre.

Outlook

15. The security situation is expected to continue to be stable. June was a positive month: pressure was maintained against persons indicted for war crimes; progress continued in the increased collection of illegal weapons; and SFOR and local authorities carried on their efforts against recidivist elements throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina.